

IBS

VOLUME 6

OCTOBER

1984
NOV 27 1984



IRISH BIBLICAL STUDIES

Editor: Rev Professor E.A. Russell
Union Theological College
Belfast BT7 1JT, N. Ireland

Associate Editor: Professor Ernest Best
13 Newmill Gdns
St Andrews, Scotland

Assistant Editor: Mrs Margaret Bullock
Union Theological College
Belfast BT7 1JT, N. Ireland

Editorial Advisory Panel

Professor D.W. Gooding, Queen's University, Belfast
Rev Dr David Hill, The University, Sheffield

Principal R.J. McKelvey, The Congregational College,
Whalley Range, Manchester M16 8BP

Professor J.C. McCullough, Knox College, Dunedin, N.Z.

Rev Professor J.S. McIvor, Union Theological College,
Belfast BT7 1JT.

Rev J. Murphy O'Connor, L'Ecole Biblique, Jerusalem

Rev J.S. McPolin, S.J., Milltown Park, Dublin 6

Professor E. Nicholson, Oriel College, Oxford

Rev V. Parkin, Edgehill College, Belfast

Mr David Payne, Queen's University, Belfast

Professor Jacob Weingreen, Trinity College, Dublin.

Subscriptions

All subscriptions should be made payable to "Irish Biblical Studies" (not to individuals) and addressed to the Assistant Editor

Subscription for 1984 (inclusive of postage):

Individuals £5.75 sterling or 7 Irish pounds

Institutions £8 sterling; US dollars 14.50

Design on cover by Rev Aylmer Armstrong, the
Presbyterian Manse, Moneydig, Co. Antrim

Contents

A. Russell, Convincing or Merely Curious? A Look at
Some Recent Writing on Galatians 156-176

R.G. Beattie, Baba Bathra and the Bible or "I don't know
why Ezekial didn't write Ezekial" 177-190

Major Reviews 191-206

Federick E. Greenspahn, Hapax Legomena in Biblical Hebrew
(D.F. Payne)

Best, The Gospel as Story, (David Hill)

ymond E. Brown, The Critical Meaning of the Bible,
(J.L.M. Haire)

arl Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vols 18, 19
(John Thompson)

E.A. Russell, Convincing or Merely Curious? A Look at
Some Recent Writing on Galatians /1

Since 1975 we have had a number of writings linked with Galatians especially coming from the U.S.A. /2 We propose to look at the more important and where convenient in chronological order.

Professor Hans Dieter Betz published in 1975 a paper entitled "The Literary Composition and Function of Paul's Letter to the Galatians." /3 He applied the theory behind this article to his major commentary on Galatians which appeared some years later. /4 The article contended that the epistle to the Galatians is an example of an "apologetic genre", found in one form or other in contemporary Greek and Latin writing. Such an epistle he maintains "presupposes the real or fictitious situation of a court of law with the jury, the accuser and the defendant." (p377). In Galatians the addressees are the jury, Paul the defendant and the opponents the accusers. Brinsmead /5 also takes up the hypothesis of Galatians being of an apologetic genre. For the sake of clarity and ease of reference the parallels between the proposed structure of Betz, followed by Brinsmead may be set out as follows:

Structure of Galatians as an "Apologetic Genre"

	<u>Betz</u>	<u>Brinsmead</u>
1.	<u>Epistolary Prescript</u> (with a basic sequence of <u>superscriptio</u> , <u>adscriptio</u> and <u>salutatio</u>) Gal 1.1-5	cf. 58-63
2.	<u>Exordium</u> (or <u>proemium</u> or <u>principium</u>) which states the <u>causa</u> of the case, the reason for writing the letter; 10-11 represent the <u>transitus</u> or <u>transgressio</u> to the next section (<u>narratio</u>) (362)	1.6-11 cf. 19,67-69

Betz

Brinsmead

3. Narratio ("statement of the facts" persuasively (cf Quintilian) with lucidity, brevity and plausibility) (364) 1.12-2.14 49-51
4. Propositio (Its function is twofold: to sum up the legal content of the narratio by an outline of the case; to provide an easy transition to the probatio) (368) 2.15-21 51-52, 69-78
5. Probatio (The most decisive part of the speech as presenting the proof, and exordium and narratio are only preparatory steps leading to this central part) (368-375) 3.1-4.31 Describes 3.1-5 as interrogatio (cf Betz 370) 52, 78-85
6. Paraenesis (O. Merk, Der Beginn der Paränese im Galaterbrief, ZNW, LX (1969), pp83-104, differs from Betz as to the point at which paraenesis begins. The latter dismisses Merk's view as not based on compositional analysis) 5.1-6.10 Calls this section refutatio 53-54
7. Postscript (serves as peroratio or conclusio ie end and conclusion of the apologetic speech, forming body of letter 6.11-18 63-66

The first reaction of the minister whose task it is to make use of commentaries especially for expository or devotional purposes may very well be one of bewilderment even astonishment at the thought of having to take such a structure with its strange terminology into account

in any work on the epistle. It involves jargon that by very nature can obscure rather than illumine for the large majority of his congregation. How possible is it to explain such terms to the average congregation without spending too much time on what after all many will consider a fringe concern? Let such an essay that sets out the theory of an "apologetic genre" for Galatians be kept for scholarly journals. Again, how sensible is it to commission a commentary where what after all is only an hypothesis to be drawn in and and where all too distractingly so frequent efforts are made to justify it? We do not find the attempt to blend the argument for an apologetic genre with commentary very successful.

It may be worthwhile to look at one illustration of this complicated argument, that which seeks to justify the use of exordium (44-46) of which we quote a section:

Speaking in terms of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, Paul's statement of the *causa* is a mixture of types of exordia, the *principium* ('Direct opening') and the *insinuatio* ('subtle approach'). The former, the *principium*, is appropriate in addressing an audience where attention, receptivity, and a favourable disposition can be obtained directly or without difficulty, while the *insinuatio* should be used in cases where for example the audience has been won over by a previous speech of the opponent.

(Commentary, 45)

It may well be asked what help or hindrance this may give us in understanding such a short passage as Gal 1.6-10. Betz gives us no less than four pages of explanation of narratio. Here he finds it necessary to refer to Cicero's definition of narratio as "an exposition of events that have occurred or are supposed to have occurred." But he has to proceed further and tell us of Cicero's division of narratio into three types, only one of which applies to Galatians as "that form of narrative which contains an exposition of a case in law." (58). It must be admitted that this is quite offputting and obstructive for one trying to get at the text and being held up by a process producing a result which hardly justifies the complex means.

But does Paul sit down and dictate Galatians, having

carefully shaped previously an apologetic structure? Is the impression Galatians gives us, of a letter calmly and carefully composed and rather proud of its adherence to literary form? Is this a contrived letter, anxious for language and style or is it a *cri de coeur* from someone who is deeply disturbed about what he sees as a serious danger to the church and its gospel? Is the use of anathema on a few occasions a cool piece of skilful rhetorical emphasis or is it not rather a poignant yet fierce attack from one who feels it in the depths of his being? It is usual to find that Paul leaves out his usual thanksgiving because he is very angry? Have we any better explanation than the hypothesis of a piece of defence rhetoric? Would it not be an excellent captatio benevolentiae to make such a gesture along with his defence. Again, how artificial or contrived are expressions like "You are severed from Christ" (4.4), or "you have fallen away from grace" (5.4), and especially "I wish those who unsettle you would mutilate themselves." (5.12). Here we have language that at times is passionate, deeply concerned, fierce, uninhibited. It presents the outpouring of one who has no time for niceties or suave or stilted expressions. Here is someone with an urgent mission to turn Galatians from the dangerous path of legalism on which they already seem to have entered. Surely to bring Paul here into a literary or rhetorical world with its preoccupation with what are after all only linguistic concerns is to misread him seriously and the task he undertakes.

We are not, however, denying that there are sections of a moderate tone here and there in the epistles. A formed catechetical or liturgical tradition on justification by faith or on ethical obligations could well lie behind e.g. 2.15-21 or 3. 6-29. Some striking examples of what appear to be independent units are discernible e.g. in Romans on the benefits of justification (5.1-11) or on a Adam/ Christ comparison (5.12-21)

Another serious problem is whether we can be certain that Paul made use of a Greek or Latin apologetic genre. Betz in spite of his splendid if complex presentation of his case only deals with a theoretical form. He cannot offer a single instance of an apologetic genre with which to compare Galatians. /6 Betz appears to be aware of this as

evidenced by the special pleading and urgent reasoning in connection with the divisions of the genre eg exordium (44-46) or narratio (58-62) or probatio (128-131). The slender evidence produced from M. Hengel eg by Brinsmead hardly helps the case. /7

Again, to make Galatians into an apologetic genre is to ignore elements in it that are not apologetic at all. /8 It ignores the real terms of affection with which Paul can from time to time address them eg "My little children with whom I am again in travail until Christ be formed in you! I could wish to be present with you now and to change my tone, for I am perplexed about you" (4. 20). Or again we may note the pastoral expression which would surely have been an odd phenomenon in the Graeco-Roman world eg "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault you who are spiritual restore him in the spirit of meekness.....Bear one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ." (6.1,2) Or again, "Let us not grow weary in well-doing for in due time we shall reap if we do not lose heart." (6.9) It is difficult to resist the impression that although he has arraigned and spoken so vehemently to the Galatians, he treats them as if they had not gone astray in these words of pastoral counsel and exhortation

We are indebted to Wayne A. Meeks for another observation. He points out the tendency with Betz to accept what he puts forward as theory as a concrete conclusion. He gives an instance /9 where Betz put forward the hypothesis that 2 Cor 6.14-7.1 is an anti-Pauline tract. It was only an hypothesis, yet later he was to argue as if it were an established fact. Has something like this happened with the theory of an apologetic genre? He dismisses Merk's argument for a different beginning for the exhortation section (parenthesis) ie at 5.1, on the basis that it was not grounded on compositional analysis ie. that of Betz himself. /10 Thus an hypothesis is seen to be an established fact.

Brinsmead seeks to develop the thesis of an apologetic genre, thus throughout Galatians is a dialogical response to opponents, who are identified with the Galatians and the whole letter is written against a single theological complex (192). Such a theology derives from one source

associated probably with apocalyptic and sectarian Judaism and in particular Qumran, (195) though not of course ceasing to be Christian. It is precisely because he makes so much of the apologetic genre theory that he identifies one set of opponents and from it to deduce their theology. If the theory of an apologetic genre falls to the ground his thesis has to be seriously qualified, if not abandoned, i.e. Galatians as a dialogical response to opponents.

Another recent book on Galatians is that of Dr George Howard, "Paul: Crisis in Galatia, A Study in Early Christian Theology" /11. Dr Howard is now Professor of Religion in the University of Georgia. The title of the book suggests his method in approaching Pauline theology. He writes: "Paul's genius is seen best when his theology is allowed to arise from the historical setting of his opponents and his methods in preaching the gospel. An understanding of Paul and biblical, historical exegesis go hand in hand. It is the historical, exegetical process which must come first if there is to be a genuine understanding of Paul's theology." (p ix)

The book begins with a predictable survey of research on Paul's opponents, reaching back to F.C. Baur. He identifies them with Jewish Christian agitators from Jerusalem who sought to have the Galatians circumcized and keep the Law, not a remarkable or unusual conclusion.

Yet Dr Howard, in coming to this conclusion, goes about it in an unusual way. He argues that the so-called opponents treated Paul as an ally, thinking that he agreed with circumcision, and that he preached and practised it. But a problem arose for them. Although Paul preached and practised circumcision, he had not at the time of his mission circumcised the Galatians. How did they explain this to themselves? Dr Howard's explanation is remarkable, even ingenious. Paul had been ill when with the Galatians, an illness that was unsightly and repellent. (13,14) Paul did not want to add to that repugnance by circumcizing them! This is quite a gratuitous suggestion totally without support in the letter or indeed any of Paul's letters. No hint is ever given that Paul practised circumcision. Thus Dr Howard gives us an imaginative and wholly unsubstantiated reconstruction of Paul's

visit to Galatia which has little to commend it.

But we are not done with the novelties in Howard's construction. It is a commonplace of NT interpretation that Paul in Galatians chapters 1 and 2 insists on the independence of his apostleship and his gospel especially in relation to the Jerusalem apostles. Sentences in the course of his general argument that support Paul's claim for independence are: "an apostle not from men nor through man but through Jesus Christ and God the Father," (1.1) or "the gospel preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from man nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ." (1.11,12) Thus Paul does not lay his gospel before the Jerusalem apostles until the conference. Nor was it due to any instruction the apostles gave him that he attended the conference but rather he went up in response to a revelation that God had given him (Gal 2.2). Dr Howard, however, suggests that this was not the reason he delayed but rather Paul deliberately waited until he had consolidated his work and proved its effectiveness; the "revelation" of 1.1,12 refers to the Damascus event in which Paul received his apostolic commission and gospel. Thus, according to Howard, it was not until the Jerusalem conference that the apostles became aware of his gospel, ie although Paul had been preaching for up to seventeen years.

The difficulties with Howard's view are apparent. The context makes it clear that Paul does insist on his independence and on a number of occasions eg "not from man nor through man" (1.1); "It did not receive it from man nor was I taught it" (1.12); "I did not confer with flesh and blood nor did I go up to those who were apostles before I was." (1.17) This fits in awkwardly with the claim that Paul deliberately waited until he had consolidated his work. Why the stress on no human agency and the special mention of not consulting the apostles? Again, to suggest that the apostles were not aware of what Paul was preaching is unlikely if we accept Paul's close links with the Jerusalem Sanhedrin before his conversion, the shock of his conversion which was bound to be familiar to the authorities, and the inevitable aftermath of enquiry as to what Paul was doing both by leading Jews and by the rather anxious Christian community.

In Galatians 2.2 Paul declares he went up ie to Jerusalem "by revelation" (kata apokalupsin). It is usual to explain this by saying that as a result of a special personal revelation and not because he was summoned by the apostles that Paul went up to Jerusalem. This is in keeping with his assertion of independence in chapters 1 and 2. Dr Howard maintains that kata here means "on account of" and that apokalupsin refers to the revelation on the Damascus road. Thus he gives an exceptional meaning to kata (there appears to be no example of this meaning in Liddell and Scott nor in the whole Pauline corpus). But the difficulty is not merely the strained interpretation of kata, but the claim that it refers to the time of his conversion. Why would Paul wait for some years to state that he went up to Jerusalem "because of such a revelation?" Dr Howard fails to explain the reason for the lengthy account in chapter 1. Would it not have been enough for Paul to say: "I met the risen Lord. He made me an apostle. I preached and my record show I have been successful. I waited for a number of years but it was my encounter with Jesus that made me go up to Jerusalem" ie if what Howard contends were valid. But this is not what Paul says

Howard has recently been charged with being an iconoclast, setting out his own interpretative "images" in place of those he pulls down. /12 We may mention two further interpretations that are unusual. 1. According to Gal 2.11f Peter sat down at table with Gentiles. But after some people came down from James to Antioch Peter withdrew. The grounds for such an action are, according to Paul, because he feared the circumcision party. It would be natural to understand this as a piece of vacillation on Peter's part. Howard does not agree. Peter's position was that Gentiles needed to be circumcised in order to be saved and this was part of his theological conviction. Thus Howard turns the meaning of the text upside down. 2. In Gal 3.11 Paul quotes from Habakkuk 2.4, "He who by faith is righteous, shall live." In the context of Gal chapter 3, Paul sets justification by faith over against justification by works of the law. Thus "faith" here (as in Romans 1.17) would be individual faith in Christ as the key to salvation. Howard,

however, - and it appears to run completely against the context - claims that the contrast is rather between man's works (including faith) and God's faithful act in fulfilling his promise (63f). (He speaks of "works" and not of the polemic phrase "works of the law"?). In chapter 3.8, we have the words, "The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith.....". Dr Howard interprets this as "faith-act" ie God keeping faith with his promise. In the context this can hardly mean anything but the faith that God bestows. Pierre Bonnard expresses its meaning more in keeping with the context when he writes: "La foi n'est pas la contribution de l'homme à la justification mais le moyen ou la méthode que Dieu choisit pour justifier gratuitement les païens." /13 Howard, on the basis of Gal 3.8 argues that as an expression of God's keeping his promise he sets men free from the tyranny of the law which divided Jews and Gentiles and thus created one united humanity. If Paul continues to accept that Jews retain the law and its practices while Gentiles need not, it is because Paul's notion of unity demands the retention of ethnic and cultural distinctiveness. Otherwise his gospel would be rendered null and void (81)

While no one will quarrel with these last sentences, it does not mean that Howard's method in reaching it is legitimate. He appears to ride roughshod over the context of Galatians on a number of occasions. He creates a Paul which scarcely fits in with that we find in the other authentic epistles. We are forced to say that the book strives after originality at the expense of the text and of logic. The bases of his exegetical and idiosyncratic conclusions are not always clear. It is hardly a very helpful contribution to the understanding of Galatians.

Dr David John Lull's book "The Spirit in Galatia, Paul's Interpretation of Pneuma as Divine Power" /14 is distinctive among treatments of Galatians in that it attempts to apply the hermeneutic known as "Process Theology" to its understanding. This hermeneutic appears to determine the way in which the biblical material is handled, the terms that are used, and even the very choice of Galatians as a convenient subject for such an approach. It claims to be "an internal analysis of Paul's statements about the Spirit in the letter to the Galatians." It does not deal with an

possibilities of development in Paul's view of the Spirit (though it may be doubted if there are any since his view was well-shaped before the first letter we have from him (Galatians?) perhaps some seventeen years after his conversion) nor does he inquire into the background eg in his use of pneuma. Dr Lull admits that his thesis represents a first step, and claims that such concentration on Galatians is an advantage for "Paul's statements about the Spirit in Galatians are understood....in their origin in Christian experience in the Galatian churches and in Paul's polemic with his opponents in Galatia." (p.x) He also considers it an advantage from a hermeneutical standpoint (ie that of Process Theology) since he can single out the concrete event which set up the church in Galatia and it is this especially since his hermeneutic is that of "Process Thought" where events are primary. Finally, he seeks to relate Paul's thought to contemporary thought as represented in Existentialism (Bultmann) and Process Theology (W. Norman Pittenger and Wolfhart Pannenburg).

It will be asked how legitimate is it to seek an understanding of scripture by applying an alien category from Philosophical Theology especially for those who believe that scripture has to be interpreted by scripture and that the Canon has to be given a special place whenever understanding of what scripture is saying is sought. Not all are prepared to admit that the authority of scripture is diminished to such an extent that we have to make use of Existential or Process Theological principles to give it respect in the minds of modern man. This is not to say that we can afford to ignore the issue of credibility for the church's message or to recognize that reason, integrity and courage are needed to draw out its essential truth for our day. But this is a different matter from taking out from other speculative systems something that may or may not be helpful in helping us to hear what God has to say to us.

What then is "Process Theology"? We take our explanation from one of the representatives Dr Lull mentions ie Norman Pittenger. In an article in the "Dictionary of Christian Theology" on Process Theology Dr Pittenger writes "The concern for the dynamics of the physical universe in which he lives, have led process

theologians to assert that it is in "event" rather than "things", in action and activity rather than in "substances"; in creation as a continuing process rather than in creation as finished product, that we may best interpret the order of nature and of human life.

Such theologians see man as "becoming." They find their criterion in the text, "God is love", to be understood in the light of the event of Jesus in whom (for Christian faith) the Lord "who moves the sun and other stars" was vividly "enfleshed".

Thus Dr Lull concentrates on the "event" which constituted the Galatian church, Galatians being seen to be useful material for his experiment. It is in events that he sees God in his continuous creation is active, but through the particular mode of the Spirit. The action of the Spirit descending on the Galatians as they respond to the proclamation in faith and, continuing within their process of "becoming" lends itself readily to process concepts. Lull's concern to emphasize the event of the Galatians receiving the Spirit and the ensuing enthusiasm makes him deny such an event was linked with baptism. If however we understand Paul aright and, pace Lull, the reception of the Holy Spirit and initiation into the church were always at the point of baptism eg in the chapters that deal especially with the implication of the outpouring of the Spirit viz 1 Cor 12-14, Paul can write:

For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body - Jews or Greeks, slaves or free - and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

Note the parallel: "all baptized into one body...all made to drink of one Spirit." If we prefer the overall view of Paul's teaching in his letters, we can as we have stated accept that by this time Paul had worked out his understanding of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. There is always the risk of distortion or onesidedness in taking Galatians on its own as Lull does. After all, it is only an occasional letter addressed to specific circumstances and shaped in relation to these circumstances. Lull, as

process theologian, prefers to take what he sees to be the "event" which lay at the foundation of the Galatian church: their ecstatic reception of the Holy Spirit and its ecstatic cry, "Abba, Father."

It is interesting to note how this concentration on Galatians affects the construction. There is little or no mention of the resurrection or of the risen Lord. In Galatians, the verb egeirō only occurs in Gal 1.1 while anistēmi and anastasis do not occur, all of them terms which relate to the "raising" of Jesus. There does appear to be a continual blurring of the distinction between Christ and the Spirit eg the unbiblical expression "Christ and Spirit" is used on some twenty occasions (this is not to deny an occasional blurring of this distinction in Paul). Paul, however, never uses the combination "Christ and Spirit." The nearest he gets to it is in sentences like "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus...." (Romans 8.2) or the Spirit paralleled to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Cor 13.13; cf 1 Cor 12.4-6)

We have seen that the major text of the process theologian is "God is love", understood in the light of the event of Jesus Christ. Lull links together the placarding of Jesus Christ crucified so closely with the reception of the Spirit that the Resurrection, which was of such importance to Paul and the church, falls into the background and the combination "Christ" (ie "crucified" equals "event") and "Spirit" (equals in Gal "event" and "process") merges.

In the final two chapters of Galatians (5,6) Paul deals extensively with the contrast of "flesh" and "spirit" (5.6-6.10). Lull considers somewhat arbitrarily it would appear that Paul's view of the "flesh" is different from that in Romans and that it is earlier. To Lull, in Gal. "flesh" is the power behind evil. In Romans it is sin. The claim is very doubtful indeed. Rather both in Romans and in Galatians sin which almost becomes personal, is that which constitutes the power behind evil. One line of explanation takes into consideration the OT word for "flesh" (basar). In the OT it is a neutral term. It is weak and mortal but not necessarily sinful. Sin can be thought of as invading the flesh, giving it a sinister

force, and enduing it with its own rebellion. Lull thus, the basis of a single epistle - Galatians, derives his understanding of sarx. If the same method were applied to Philippians where sarx does not occur, would this imply that Paul had no interest in or no sinister view of "flesh" when he wrote Philippians?

When we begin to think in terms of "person" for the Holy Spirit, it may be we are pushing later concepts on to Paul's view of the Spirit. And yet when we look for other methods of expressing what Paul says about the Spirit, it would be difficult to get any other word than that which has emerged in the course of history, "person". Bultmann may explain the Spirit anthropologically in terms of a new "self-understanding". Lull may not go as far as this but we may if we will see the influence of process theology in the way he does. He personalizes the Spirit as evident in the expressions he uses. He speaks of the Spirit as "it" and not "He" (in Greek of course pneuma is neuter necessitating a neuter attribute though not necessarily denying what we call "personality" of any less status than the Father or Jesus). He claims that Paul thought of the Spirit as a fluidum (197), as a discrete "entity", a historical "entity", "a mode of the presence of God in history." For Lull, the Spirit tends to be identified with the eternal Spirit in whom everyone lives and through which, "with the whole cosmos" everyone has their own creative ground. Lull, however, denies this on the score that the historical event of the death of Christ "calls for sustained attention to the love of God which is present in the Spirit", and that, therefore, the Spirit can be spoken of "as a particular, but not exclusive, mode of God's being in-the-world." (200). It is evident that the language of process theology has taken over from biblical expression and not with any gain but rather loss in understanding.

The book is an intriguing, if somewhat laborious and repetitive attempt to apply a specific hermeneutic from modern philosophical theology to an ancient letter. Such a hermeneutic takes over the biblical hermeneutic though an attempt is made to conflate or relate both. Examples of carefully worked out exegesis on more traditional lines may be found e.g. in Part 2, "The Historicity (sic!) of the Spirit." On the whole in our view the first attempt to apply our knowledge to apply Process Theology to the understanding of Galatians raises more problems than it solves.

Finally, we come to the work of Dr Richard B. Hays, "The Faith of Jesus Christ, An Investigation of the Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3.1-4.11". /15 Dr Hays seeks to find the "core" of the gospel /16, its "constant elements". He does not find an explanation in terms of systematized doctrine (cf Reformers), eschatological participation in Christ (Schweitzer), justification (Käsemann), existentialism (Bultmann) or subjective religious experience (Deissmann, Jeremias) entirely satisfactory. The springboard for undertaking his thesis Dr Hays attributes to a sentence from J.C. Beker, neglected by other critics: "the investigation of the nature and method of Paul's theological language." /17 Such an investigation must, he says, "reckon with the centrality of narrative elements in its thought." (p5). This narrative Hays identifies with Paul's allusions to the story of Jesus Christ. From them he discerns some features of its narrative "shape" and examines the way in which the story operates as a constraint governing the logic of argumentation. On page six, Dr Hays gives careful expression to his claim:

"The gospel story does not determine Paul's discourse in the sense that the latter follows directly and inevitably from the former - indeed Paul's letters may be read as running arguments with opponents who draw different inferences from the same story - but the story provides the foundational structure upon which Paul's argumentation is founded."

And if Paul absorbs diverse traditions in his letters, it is made possible because he interprets them within the framework of a narrative pattern.

Our first reaction to this may be predictable, perhaps, but nevertheless worth expressing. It is well-known that Paul makes so little reference to the historic Jesus in his letters, so much so that it is claimed he has no interest in him. His major concern is with the crucified and risen Lord. We find no such expression as that we find in the Book of Acts in Peter's address to the Jews, "Jesus whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release him. But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, and kill the Author of life, whom God raised from the

dead." (3.13-15; cf also 2.22-23). Paul, of course, may and probably does, assume that his readers know what the story of Jesus is; again, what is crucial to him, where his main concern lies, is in the implication of the somewhat truncated story ie of the final events, the death for sin and the resurrection, interpreted as the first-fruits of them that slept. There is little evidence of a story without explanation or interpretation.

Dr Hays is well aware of the distinction of story in relation to interpretation. He mentions Fry's analysis of "story" (muthos) and "interpretation" (dianoia). He also mentions a distinction between "story" and "narrative", the former referring to content and the latter to the story as "narrated"; "Paul's gospel is a story; it has a structure but it is not a narrative except when it is actually narrated." (p17). But if Paul's thought is to be understood in terms of an underlying narrative structure, this perspective, he points out, is merely a useful heuristic device by which Paul's thought is illumined for us in significant ways and solutions offered to several vexing exegetical problems (p13).

Dr Hays concentrates on a selected passage from Galatians, 3.1-4.11 on various grounds: it is a block of Paul's theological prose; it reviews for the Galatians the basic of the gospel and includes kerygmatic summaries (3.13-14; 3.22; 3.26-28; 4.3-6); further, the text is difficult - full of exegetical puzzles where the theory of a narrative substructure can be tested for its contribution to understanding (pp28-29). The sections on which Dr. Hays concentrates his attention are kerygmatic or credal formulations (3.13-14 and 4.3-6). How closely is the so-called narrative substructure related to such kerygmatic formulations?

It must be confessed that it is difficult to see the value of Greimas's model analysis of narrative structure with its perplexing jargon. Simple stories are obscured by complicated jargon eg syntagms, disjunction/conjunction, actantial, so many idiosyncratic. Even Hays calls it "esoteric"! The greatest problems for the thesis of a narrative substructure lie in the area of the exegetical claims that Hays makes. We refer in /

particular to chapter IV, "The Function of pistis in the Narrative Structure of Paul's Gospel". In chapter three he justifies his examination of the Galatians' passages on the Greimas model - which he himself admits is a relatively pedantic exercise! - by claiming that this theoretical narrative model provides a degree of methodological control, a criterion by which we can evaluate the perception that Paul's exposition presupposes a Gospel story. It is at this point the weakness of Hays' position emerges more clearly than elsewhere especially in his not taking sufficiently seriously the context where he imposes his interpretations.

First, the problem of the meaning of pistis. It can have two meanings with which we are specially concerned: "faith" which a man puts in Jesus Christ and by which he is justified; or the "faithfulness" by which he lives out his life. In Gal 2.16 we have the words: "We....who know that a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ in order to be justified by faith in Jesus Christ and not by works of the law."

The phrase hē pistis Iēsou Christou by itself would mean either "the faith of Jesus Christ" or "the faithfulness of Jesus Christ". Dr Hays prefers to think of Paul referring to the "faithfulness" of Jesus Christ in carrying out his Father's will, a reasonable suggestion suited to his view of a narrative substructure - reasonable that is if we had not context to help us. But the RSV translators, rightly in our view, in the light of the context, translate the two phrases dia pisteōs Iēsou Christou and ek pisteōs Iēsou Christou as "through faith ..." or "by faith in Jesus Christ". Why do they reject the translation - along with most scholars - of "faithfulness"? We can suggest three reasons:

1. Both clauses are placed together with the phrase "even we have believed in Jesus Christ". Here we have the aorist referring to the point in time when they put their trust (episteusamen) in Jesus Christ. Here Jesus is the object of the believer's trust. To speak of the "faithfulness of Jesus Christ" here would be quite odd.

2. We have two occurrences of the regular polemical

phrase "works of the law", not "works" but "works of the law." Paul places these in contrast to the principle of "faith". Is he likely to place "not by works of the law" over against the "faithfulness of Jesus Christ" and not rather over against "faith in Jesus Christ" as the contrary situation? If it is a condensed phrase, it is because he accepts it will be understood without spelling it out in full. Thus Iēsou Christou is objective genitive: "faith in Jesus Christ."

3. Accepting that these are two principles of salvation, set over against one another, that of the Jew and that of the Christian, then the stress is on man's response. To bring in Jesus' faithfulness into such a contrast must be considered awkward.

There are also more general considerations. There is the comparative rarity of the phrase "the faith of Jesus Christ" in the NT. / 18 Of only eight instances, six are found in Paul and in epistles that are generally taken as authentic (Rom 3.22,26; Gal 2.16²; 3.22; Phil 3.9; cf Eph 3.12). In all these six instances there is the contrast of faith in Jesus and works of the law. Especially striking - it is found in a rather isolated passage - is Phil 3.9: "that I may...be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own, based on law, but that which is through faith in Christ (dia pisteōs Christou) the righteousness from God that depends on faith." Further, when it is the adjective pistos ("faithful") that is used, Paul uses it for God (the Father)(he also uses it of man but this is not relevant to our purpose) and invariably so eg "God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord (1 Cor 1.9; cf also 1 Cor 10.13; 2 Cor 1.18; 1 Thess 3.24; in 2 Thess 3.3, a disputed letter, the somewhat ambiguous Kurios is used; cf also 1 John 1.9; but cf Heb. 2.17 where Jesus is described as "merciful and faithful High Priest").

If Paul had been interested, within the traditions it is clear he had opportunity to emphasize the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. Over against the disobedience of Adam he can stress the obedience of Jesus (Rom 5); in the Philippian hymn he can stress the obedience of Jesus to the lowest point of degradation, death on a Cross - a

phrase possibly added by Paul if it breaks the rhythm as some claim. But this extreme point of humiliation is contrasted with the supreme exaltation that God gives to Jesus. Paul never gives us the simple story of Jesus. It is what it means, its theology that lies behind his constructions; if we want to use Frye's phrase - we are not certain how useful it is - it is more if not all, a matter of dianoia rather than muthos. But it is a fact that must not be overlooked, pistis throughout the NT applies almost invariably to the believer whether what one believes or in whom he believes - it is almost exclusively, to put it in another way, anthropological. Thus to take it in the passages Dr Hays mentions as the faithfulness of Jesus Christ is to run contrary to the usage, not merely of Paul, but the whole NT. It is indeed possible to argue that the Fourth Evangelist leaves out the noun pistis because it might take away from the sense of active trust (he invariably uses pisteuō)

This is not the place to deal at length with some of the other interpretations of Dr Hays. Where in ch 3. 2 we have ex akoēs pisteōs, (RSV "By hearing with faith") Dr Hays prefers to take it as the "message of what is believed", suggesting it does not refer to the Galatians' act or attitude of faith (p149). While akoē can suggest "message" and if it does, it can mean the message that brings about faith taking pisteōs as objective genitive on the other hand, it can mean - and more usually does - "the hearing of faith" ie the response of faith (cf the lengthy discussion by H.N. Ridderbos ad loc. in his commentary on Galatians (NICNT, Grand Rapids 1953)).

In 3.16 we have the quotation of Habakkuk 2.4 by Paul "He-who-is- righteous-by-faith shall live" or "The righteous shall live by faith". Dr Hays argues rather oddly, following a suggestion of A.T. Hanson, that ho dikaios is the Messiah (pp151-154) and that ek pisteōs need not refer to the believer's faith but to the Messiah's faithfulness and that all the following three interpretations are possible: "The Messiah will live by (his own) faith, (faithfulness)"; "the righteous person will live as a result of the Messiah's faith (fulness)"; "the righteous person will live by (his own) faith (in the Messiah)" and should be taken together. Thus again Dr Hays seems

to hold all too lightly to the context of Galatians without any appreciable gain in understanding viz that the reception of the Spirit is given to the believers on the basis of Christ's faithfulness. Paul does not doubt that Christ is faithful and that he fulfilled the complete and righteous will of God but whether he inserts it in the areas where he discusses justification by faith and especially the passages claimed by Dr Hays is debatable indeed

In spite of Dr Hays carefully worked out argument and his awareness of the difficulties of his thesis, he seems all too ready to see what fits in with his thesis rather than what suits the Pauline context. Some of his suggested interpretations are quite unusual if not precocious. There are too many difficulties in the way of accepting a narrative substructure for Paul's theological language in the form in which it is presented here. And even if it had validity, and all the problems were dealt with, we find it difficult to see how it can bring much illumination to the way in which Paul is to be understood.

Notes

1. No attempt will be made in this paper to examine the problem of the identification of the "Galatians". The matter has been thoroughly discussed and, with the loss of authority for Acts among some scholars, the Northern theory has gained ground. Nor will we need to re-open the somewhat worn discussion on reconciling Gal 2 with Acts. The tendency today is to concentrate on the "authentic" Pauline letters with Acts acting by way of corroboration as a secondary source.

On the matter of identifying the opponents of Paul in Galatians, among opinions are the following: apostles at Jerusalem with Peter as leader (F.C. Baur, 1831); Jewish Judaizers not supported by the Jerusalem church (J.B. Lightfoot, 1896); two groups: (i) Judaistic nomism and (ii) a spiritualistic, libertinistic, ultrapaulinistic group (W. Lütgert, 1919; J.H. Ropes, 1929); Jewish Christian nomists (H. Schlier; he also distinguishes between what the opponents are in themselves and the portrait Paul gives, Gal 1951) sectarian Jewish Christians with Gnostic colouring

but mainly legalistic (G. Stählin, 1957); Jewish Christian gnostics (W. Schmithals, 1970); Gentile Judaizers (J. Munck, 1959); Pharisaic group of Judaizing Christians, not supported by the Jerusalem church (H.J. Schoeps, 1959; he claims Paul misunderstood the Jewish law); Jewish Christian gnostics (K. Wegenast, 1962; as Schmithals); opponents gnostic but Paul thought they were Pharisaic Jewish Christians (W. Marxsen, 1968); Jewish Christians afraid of zealot pressure from Judea, initiated a nomistic campaign to circumcize Galatians to offset zealot reprisals (R. Jewett, 1970/71); Jewish Christian judaizers influenced by Pharisaism (A. Oepke, 1973); Galatians not at all by Paul but letter is directed toward orthodox Judaism mainly (J.C. O'Neill, 1972); Jewish Christians who preached circumcision and liberty from the law as well (W.G. Kummel, 1975)

2. The articles/books are: George Howard, Crisis in Galatia, Cambridge 1979; David John Lull, The Spirit in Galatia, Chico 1980; Bernard Hungerford Brinsmead, Galatians - Dialogical Response to Opponents, Chico 1982; Richard B. Hays, The Faith of Jesus Christ, Chico 1983; Hans Dieter Betz, The Literary Composition and Function of Paul's Letter to the Galatians, NTS, 1975, pp353-379; and Galatians, Hermeneia Commentary Series, Philadelphia, 1979.
3. See Note 2
4. See Note 2
5. See Note 2.
6. JBL, Vol 100, 2, 1981, pp304-307
7. Brinsmead, p231; Notes 129, 133
8. Cf Richard B. Hays, "Precisely the observation that Paul appeals to the Galatians' experience of the Spirit as a premise from which he can argue deals a serious blow to Betz's theory that Galatians is an apology written 'in defense of the Spirit' ", op.cit. p179, N.16; again Dr Hays notes that Betz's exegetical observations on Gal 3.1-5 contradict his hypothesis about the aim of

the letter (ibid)

9. JBL, 92, 1, 1973, pp88-108
10. Otto Merk, Der Beginn der Paränese im Galaterbrief, ZNW 60, 1969, pp83-104; cf Betz, Comm. p253, N.5
11. See Note 2
12. JBL, 100,2, 1981, pp307-308- the review of Howards' book offers serious criticisms of the "poorly written and poorly edited" book, its "questionable logic, excessively imaginative exegesis, and overly-speculative historical reconstructions." This present paper was delivered before Dr Sam B. Williams' review came into the writer's hands.
13. L'Épître de Saint Paul aux Galates, Neuchâtel 1972² p66
14. Cf the review by the present writer in IBS 4, July 1982, pp171-174; and note 2 above.
15. See above Note 2
16. J. Christiaan Beker, "Contingency and Coherence in the Letters of Paul", USQR 33, 1978, pp141-151 (an article not available to the present writer.
17. op.cit. p65
18. It is notable that it never occurs except after a preposition whether dia (Rom 3.22,25; Gal 2.16; 3.26; Phil 3.9) or ek (Rom 3.26; Gal 3.22) though there does not appear to be much difference if any between the expressions other than rhetorical.

BABA BATHRA AND THE BIBLE

or

"I DON'T KNOW WHY EZEKIEL DIDN'T WRITE EZEKIEL"

D.R.G. Beattie

In this essay I am committing to paper some thoughts, which I have been turning over in my mind for some time, in the hope that some progress may be made towards drawing conclusions from them. It should be explained at the outset that the quotation in my title is taken from Rashi's commentary on Baba Bathra 15a in the Babylonian Talmud, where, in the course of the baraita on the proper order and authorship of the books of the Hebrew Bible, the book of Ezekiel, amongst others, is attributed to the Men of the Great Assembly. But of that more anon.

My interest is attracted to Baba Bathra 14b/15a because it probably represents the earliest known attempt to deal systematically with the question of the origin and authorship of the biblical books. In making this nomination I am not offering to date the baraita any more precisely than follows from its classification, i.e. its attribution to the tannaitic period, which is to say, the first two centuries C.E. I am, furthermore, ignoring as possible rival contenders those remarks in the New Testament which, while they may reflect first century attitudes to the authorship of certain biblical books, were not demonstrably intended as answers to questions of authorship or origin, and the passage in IV Ezra 14 which may have been intended to advocate, in its hagiological way, the notion (for which the earlier generations of modern biblical scholars there found support) that Ezra exercised an editorial hand in the whole of the Old Testament.

My interest in the baraita starts, as I was saying, with the fact of its age, but more than that, because, despite its age, it is relatively "advanced" in its thinking. It is far ahead of what many are pleased to call "traditional" attributions, which is to say, the assumption that where an Old Testament book is known by

the name of a male individual that individual should be presumed to be its author. This is where, for me, interest becomes fascination which is at the same time frustration. "Our teachers" who "taught" the contents of the baraita did not explain their conclusions, or, if they did, their explanations have not been preserved. Sometimes their reasoning may be guessed at with some degree of assurance, at other times it is quite unclear. To allude back to my title, for a moment, as an example of the latter: why should the book of Ezekiel be thought to have been written by anyone other than the prophet Ezekiel himself? But to get back to the job in hand, I propose first to examine the contents of the two pages of Talmud, with some comments and questions, and then to see what conclusions can be drawn.

Basically the baraita (the teaching of the tannaitic masters) is presented in three stages: 1) the order of the Prophets, 2) the order of the Writings, and 3) the question (and its answer), "Who wrote the books?" Each section is followed by discussion of a few points raised in the preceding section of baraita, the third discussion spinning off into a wide-ranging discussion on texts from Job.

The order of the Prophets (i.e. the order in which the books of the Prophets are to be placed when bound together) is said to be, first of all: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings. So far this is the sensible historical sequence. Then, it is said, come Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah and the Twelve, and this sequence, which is not chronologically correct, gave rise to the discussion which follows. First it was suggested that Hosea should come first because Hos 1:1 says, "God spoke first to Hosea", but the explanation was offered that (a) "first" does not mean "first of all" and (b) the book of Hosea, being too small to stand alone and being therefore grouped with the other Minor Prophets in the collection which also incorporated the books of the latest prophets, the collection was placed at the end of the Prophets section with Hosea standing at the head of the collection. This seems a reasonably satisfactory

resolution to the issue and, while one might feel inclined to join in the discussion with such questions as "But why do not Amos and Micah follow immediately after Hosea?", we may pass on to the second point raised in the talmudic discussion, which is that Isaiah should come before Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

The reason given in explanation of the order in the baraita - that destruction (which is described in Jeremiah and the beginning of Ezekiel) is placed next to destruction (at the end of Kings), and consolation (in Isaiah) next to consolation (in the latter part of Ezekiel) - has to be recognized as a defence from a later period of the statement of the Tannaim. It is not a part of that statement but an attempt to justify the order described there, and not, perhaps, a particularly satisfactory one at that, as is implicitly acknowledged by the translator of the Soncino edition.¹

Now, a substantive question arises here. Why did the Tannaim assert that the order should be Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah? If we cannot accept the talmud's answer, and I do not think we can, we must look for another. But what? Clearly the order is not chronological, since Isaiah lived before both Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Nor is it based on the size of the books: in terms of chapters, and reckoning from largest to smallest, the order would be Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel. Counting in verses, the order would be Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel.

Could it be something to do with ideas about the origin of the books? We may recall the position of the book of the Twelve Prophets in the list. The inclusion in the collection of the words of the latest Prophets means that the completion of the collection must be late, and so it stands last of all. Is it possible that the order Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, is based on an opinion that the book of Isaiah was completed later than that of Ezekiel? Otto Eissfeldt² thought so, but this thesis breaks down if the statement on authorship, which follows in the baraita, is brought into consideration, for Isaiah

is attributed to Hezekiah and his colleagues, while Ezekiel is attributed to the Men of the Great Assembly and this would seem to require the placing of Isaiah before Ezekiel (if not even before Jeremiah) on grounds not only of chronology but of keeping together the two works (Ezekiel and the Twelve) attributed to the Men of the Great Assembly.

We may, of course, ask whether it is right to import these notions of authorship at this point. Perhaps we ought at least to make allowance for the possibility that the "order" section and the "authorship" section were originally distinct from one another and, perhaps, reflect different opinions. In any case, the attribution of Isaiah to Hezekiah's men raises a question which will be aired later. However, before moving on, I would like to make one suggestion about the order of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, the Twelve. Jeremiah, it might be said, follows naturally after Kings, even without postulating common authorship, because Jeremiah's activities belong to the period at the end of the book of Kings, and Ezekiel follows Jeremiah, on chronological grounds. But the book of Isaiah has a very wide range, chronologically speaking. Where precisely, it might be asked, ought it to go in the sequence? In this respect it displays some similarity to the book of the Twelve. Could this be the reason why the two are placed side by side? Could it be, in other words, that Isaiah is not so much "after" Ezekiel as "before" the Twelve?

Moving on to the order of the Writings,³ the sequence here could be chronological according to authorship, but if the authors were envisaged as those named in the following section there is a problem about Job, a problem which is, indeed, aired in the talmudic discussion. (To digress briefly, Slotki's note⁴ says "with the exception of Job the order is meant to be chronological" and he invites the reader to see Rashi. If the invitation is accepted it will be found that Rashi doesn't quite agree. He sees the whole arrangement as chronological, including Job. Rashi thought Job lived in

the time of the Queen of Sheba. He may have reasoned further that his life overlapped with that of David and Solomon but, in any case, the position of Job between Psalms and Proverbs was satisfactory to him.) But if we treat the talmudic explanation⁵ for the position of Job as a post-tannaitic⁶ rationalization of the sequence which had been handed down, then we may look for another reason for the order.

Two possibilities occur to me: EITHER Mosaic authorship of Job was not envisaged (we may note the diversity of opinion voiced later on (15b) about the date of Job's life - most tannaitic opinion put Job after Moses' time and this would seem to conflict with Mosaic authorship) OR authorship was not a primary issue and the arrangement is basically thematic, although still having some chronological element: the Wisdom books - Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, stand together as the nucleus of the collection of poetic books, preceded by the Psalms, which perhaps merit an early position in their own right, even without associating them with David, and with Ruth standing at the head since that story belongs chronologically in a early position. The Song of Songs follows the Wisdom literature,⁷ perhaps for want of any better place to put it, and Lamentations,⁸ which clearly relates to the destruction of Jerusalem, stands last in the poetic section. Then the two books (Daniel and Esther) which relate to the Exile and, finally, Ezra and Chronicles (although, of course, the reverse order would be better here).

Turning now to the section on authorship, I would first of all offer the passage in my own translation, which differs slightly from that in the Soncino Talmud.

Moses wrote his book and the portion of Balaam and Job. Joshua wrote his book and eight verses which are in the Torah. Samuel wrote his book and Judges and Ruth. David wrote the book of Psalms by (sic) Adam, Melchizedek, Abraham, Moses, Heman, Yeduthun, Asaph, and the three sons of Korah. Jeremiah

wrote his book, the book of Kings, and Lamentations. Hezekiah and his colleagues wrote Isaiah, Proverbs, the Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes. The Men of the Great Assembly wrote Ezekiel, the Twelve, Daniel and the Scroll of Esther. Ezra wrote his book and the genealogies of Chronicles up to his own time.

Here the various authors are enumerated in a kind of mixed historical and canonical order. That it is neither wholly the one nor the other is shown by the fact that Hezekiah belongs chronologically before Jeremiah and David belongs canonically last except for Ezra. The sequence Moses, Joshua, Samuel could be either chronological or canonical. The intrusion of David immediately after Samuel is clearly chronological: he belongs historically close to Samuel. Then we jump to Jeremiah, presumably because one of his books, Kings, stands next to Samuel in the canon, and the other two books attributed to him are mentioned at the same time, his "own" book being named first as a logical opening (similarly, Samuel's other books - Judges and Ruth - are mentioned after his "own" book). Then we have Hezekiah and his men, as authors of Isaiah (the Prophetic book being named first, before the Writings), Proverbs, the Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes, with the Men of the Great Assembly and Ezra bringing up the rear: here the order is again historical, or is it? It depends whether the Men of the Great Assembly are viewed as contemporaries of Ezra, or identified with the last of the prophets.

Four or five points are queried in the talmudic discussion: 1) Whether it was Moses or Joshua who wrote the last eight verses of Deuteronomy. The dispute is attributed to second century Tannaim. R. Judah (or R. Nehemiah) said Joshua wrote them, but R. Simeon thought Moses had written them at divine dictation because already in Deut 31:26 he refers to "the book of the law". An attempt was made to resolve the question by appeal to a principle of Rab, that in synagogue reading these last verses are to be read by one person alone, but this, it

seems, could be construed as supporting either side (I must confess that I don't see why), and so the matter was allowed to rest there. It may, however, be worthy of note that the oldest opinion is that Joshua wrote these eight verses.

2) and 3) In contrast to 1), there was no suggestion that either Joshua or Samuel recorded their own deaths. That the books of Joshua and Samuel should have been reckoned to have been completed by, respectively, Eleazar and Phineas, and Gad and Nathan (these latter names having been found in I Chr 29:29) is a concession to commonsense of a kind, though we may regret the lack of an tannaitic (or amoraic) William of Ockham to apply his razor to the unnecessary hypothesis of involving either Joshua or Samuel at all. Perhaps here we may comment on the apparent difference in attitude towards the Pentateuch and Former Prophets, on the one hand, and the Latter Prophets and Writings on the other. In the former case there is the "conservative" tendency to attribute authorship to the person named in the title (at least in the cases of Joshua and Samuel), while in the latter case attributions are relatively "radical" with few books (only Jeremiah and Ezra, really) ascribed to the "obvious" candidates.

4) At the fourth stage of the discussion two questions were raised: (i) Why is not Ethan the Ezrahite, who is named in the title of Ps 89, not mentioned among the "ten"? The answer is given that he is really Abraham. Perhaps we should turn the question on its head and ask why Abraham is named in the first place. Why should it be thought that he had a hand, in any sense, in composing the Psalms? It must be because the identification had already been made. (ii) Why are Moses and Heman both named if, as Rab said, Moses is Heman? The answer given is that there were two Hemans; in other words, the Heman named in the title of Ps 88 is not Moses. Presumably this answer is in direct conflict with the opinion of Rab just cited.

Some other questions which we might ask here are:

why should "ten elders" be involved at all, or why these ten (given that Solomom, named in the title of Ps 72, is not included - although we could perhaps mention that the tosafists seem to have substituted his name for that of Asaph - and that there seems to be no particular reason for restricting the sons of Korah to three)? What exactly was meant by "by" (or "wrote", for that matter)? Perhaps, even, why was David credited with the general editorship (if that was the intention), and not, say, Hezekiah and his men, or the Men of the Great Assembly? And who did they think had written Ps 137, for example? Was it David speaking prophetically? (It may be worth mentioning that Rashi, commenting on the phrase "by ten elders", thought that they all either preceded or were contemporary with David.)

5) Finally the talmudic discussssion turned to the Mosaic literature, with attention focussed on Job because the statement that Moses wrote Job was held to support the opinion of R. Levi b. Lahma (a 3rd century Palestinian Amora) that Job and Moses were contemporaries, although by implication it is at odds with many of the other opinions cited.

The diversity of opinion as to the date of Job's lifetime (which continues overleaf on to 15b) must, since many of the dates proposed are after the time of Moses, raise the question of how seriously the idea of Mosaic authorship of Job can ever have been held, or even of why it ever was proposed. This is especially so since the earliest authorities named⁹ and "the Sages" (presumably indicating the generality of tannaim) all dated Job to times after Moses; it was only "some" who said Job lived in the time of Jacob and married his daughter Dinah.

The other remarks about the Mosaic literature are no less interesting. "Moses wrote his book": this statement, while corresponding in form to similar statements made about Joshua, Samuel, Jeremiah and Ezra, seems an odd way of saying Moses wrote the Pentateuch, which is clearly what it means, although it is unlikely that the Pentateuch ever bore the title *Mosheh*. Or

again, what sense is there in saying "Moses wrote his book and the portion Balaam" when the portion Balaam¹⁰ forms part of that book? It could probably be argued that the book which Moses is said in the first place to have written must be something other than the Pentateuch, just as some people have in fact argued that *parashat Balaam* is not a part of the Pentateuch but a separate work no longer extant. But both of these attitudes are/would be wrong, I think. I cannot explain why the baraita treats the Pentateuch as though it were called "Moses", but I can, I think, explain the reference to the section about Balaam.

The statement that Moses wrote the part of the Pentateuch which deals with Balaam is, I think, like the statement that Joshua wrote eight verses of the Pentateuch, a response to a critical observation which has not been preserved: "How could Moses, who was with the Israelites in the plain while Balaam was pronouncing his blessings on them from the heights above, have known the details of these contemporary events in which he had no part?" The challenge to the idea of Mosaic authorship of this part of the Pentateuch is turned aside by the assertion that he wrote it. If I am right, it means that Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch had been challenged, on two points, by the first century or so of the Common Era.

From here we could perhaps attempt a summary. Two things can clearly be said about biblical criticism in the tannaitic period: 1) No more was known in that period than at any subsequent time about the origin of the biblical books, and 2) the quest for answers to questions on this topic had already begun and had moved beyond the simplest stages. The tannaim, unlike many who lived many centuries, even millennia, later, were not content to assign authorship of a book purely on the basis of its title. Although they did so occasionally - there can hardly be any other reason for assigning Joshua, Samuel and Ezra to Joshua, Samuel and Ezra, respectively, although it must be noted that the first two attributions were not allowed to stand unquestioned -

it is surely worthy of note that amongst the Latter Prophets, where the presumption of authorship by the person named in the title is easiest to make, only one volume, Jeremiah, is attributed to the prophet himself.

This attribution was presumably based on the statement in Jer 36 that a book of Jeremiah's oracles was written - and re-written in an expanded form after its destruction - by Baruch at Jeremiah's dictation. So, if we say that for one group of books (Joshua, Samuel, Ezra) the question of authorship was decided simply on the basis of titles, we must say that for a second group the decision was based on statements made in the books in question. In this group we may include with Jeremiah, the Pentateuch (Mosaic authorship being based presumably on a simple-minded reading of Deut 31:9, "Moses wrote this Torah"), Psalms (where David and the others feature in titles or texts in individual psalms), and Proverbs (where Hezekiah and his colleagues are mentioned at the beginning of chapter 25.).

But there is a third group, larger than either of the first two (equivalent in size to the first two groups put together), where attribution of authorship can be described only as the result of an historical-critical approach. Such an approach, it must be noted, is not entirely absent from the first two groups. It emerges in the denial to Joshua, Samuel and Moses, respectively, of the totality of the books of Joshua, Samuel and the Pentateuch. But in the third group the only discernible basis for attributing authorship is the identification of some notable figure who lived at the earliest time a particular book could have been written. Thus Judges and Ruth are ascribed to Samuel, Kings and Lamentations to Jeremiah, Chronicles to Ezra, and Esther and the Twelve to the Men of the Great Assembly.

Perhaps Isaiah, Ezekiel and Daniel should be included in this group, but I'm inclined to distinguish these three as a separate group where something more than an elementary historical perspective was involved. It is easy for us to surmise that Isaiah could have been seen

as a composite work and that this is the reason why it was not assigned to the prophet himself (although the question, to which I alluded earlier in the discussion, could be raised of why it should have been attributed to Hezekiah and his colleagues. Rashi recognized a chronological problem in the attribution which he solved by postulating that the literary college (or whatever we may call it) founded by Hezekiah continued to function after his death); it might even be supposed that the same consideration applied in the case of Daniel - i.e. it was seen as a composite work and therefore assigned to a period some time after Daniel's life, and so to the Men of the Great Assembly; but what about Ezekiel?

Rashi also recognized this problem - hence the statement which appears in my title - and the only suggestion he could make was that prophecy was not allowed to be written outside Palestine, and so Ezekiel's prophecies could not be written down until after the return. The same explanation could be made to cover Daniel, and Rashi did this, but, while it is not impossible that the notion should have been in the minds of the tannaim, there is no evidence that it is anything other than Rashi's own conjecture and therefore no older than the Middle Ages. On the other hand, an objection to this theory was seen by the Tosafists - Rashi's own disciples - who pointed out that since we are told in Jeremiah of Jeremiah's migration to Egypt but not of his return it must follow that he did not return and therefore must have completed his book in Egypt.

Finally there is a small group of three books where the attribution of authorship is quite mysterious: why Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs should have been attributed to Hezekiah and his men I cannot imagine, unless the intention was to say that they were in the first place composed by Solomon and revised or edited, like Proverbs, by Hezekiah's men. The third book in this group is Job. The attribution of Job to Moses could presumably stem from the presentation of Job as a patriarchal figure, but the attribution is strange at a time when, as Baba Bathra 15b suggests, majority opinion

held that Job lived long after Moses.

When I began to commit my thoughts to paper I imagined that I would stop at about this point, having aired all my thoughts on the matter, but I shall continue a little longer for two reasons. One is the feeling that an Ockhamist razor needs to be applied to the perhaps unnecessarily multiplied groups of books in the preceding analysis, the other is the unexpected arrival of a new thought on the matter of Ezekiel, which I had been tending to see as a quite insoluble problem. I would start here with the suggestion that I have been asking the wrong question. The question to ask is not "Why did the tannaim not attribute Ezekiel to Ezekiel?" but "Why should they have attributed it to him?"

What I mean to say is this: it is wrong to start with the assumption that, in setting out to look for authors for biblical books, the natural choice should first be those named in the titles. This seems to us the natural starting-place because, I suggest, of the New Testament headings which were clearly intended to indicate authorship, but the tannaitic rabbis did not have this heritage. I suggest it never occurred to them to assign authorship on such grounds, and the one argument I can offer in support of this suggestion rests on the case of Jeremiah. The one book amongst the Latter Prophets which is attributed to the prophet himself is the one which contains the information that the prophet himself supervised the preparation of a collection of his oracles. Without such information, the natural assumption of the tannaim was that the book was produced by someone (actually, always in the case of the Prophets it was some group) who lived at a later time.

The more one thinks about this the more rational it becomes. The prophet himself (any particular prophet) is the last person to be judged the author of a book of his oracles. Having spoken his word at the proper time his job was done. It would be for others to decide that the word was worthy of preservation.

I would now go on from here to revise my earlier opinion and deny that any attribution was decided solely on the basis of titles. Earlier I suggested that in the case of the books of Joshua, Samuel and Ezra there is no apparent reason other than the titles of the books for proposing authorship by those three men, but perhaps there is. Granted that Moses is apparently said in the Pentateuch to have written it, denial of the last eight verses of Deuteronomy to Moses requires a successor of Moses to have written these verses, and Joshua is the obvious candidate. Once he is viewed as a writer of even a small section it is easy to propose that he continued the work by writing the book of Joshua - and indeed who else could we expect to be nominated, given that the tannaim did not assign any book to an unnecessarily late date? - with the proviso that he did not complete the book, because of his own death. Similarly, Samuel is perhaps already on the scene, so to speak, as the author of Judges and Ruth, before he is credited with writing the first part of Samuel, and Ezra is the author of Chronicles, as well as Ezra.

On this approach I am able, I think, to reduce the five groups of my previous analysis to two. There are those where authorship is decided on the basis of something said in the book, and those where it depends on historical considerations, or perhaps it would be better, since the Pentateuch falls into both camps, to say merely that there were two principles employed. Either way it must be said that the tannaim had rational bases for their conclusions and nothing was simply "traditional".

There still remain some areas of uncertainty, e.g. why Job was attributed to Moses and why Hezekiah was credited with so much, but I have got further than I hoped I would when I started out on my path and will rest there for the moment.

NOTES

- 1 On the phrase "Isaiah is full of consolation", R. Slotki comments, "Strictly speaking, this applies only to the latter half of Isaiah, ch. XL-LXVI, though strains of consolation are interspersed throughout the first part also." (Soncino translation, note 7.)
- 2 O. Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament. An Introduction*, (Oxford, 1965) p.570.
- 3 "The order of the Hagiographa is Ruth, the Book of Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Lamentations, Daniel and the Scroll of Esther, Ezra and Chronicles." (Soncino translation.)
- 4 Soncino translation, note 1.
- 5 "Now on the view that Job lived in the days of Moses, should not the book of Job come first? We do not begin with a record of suffering." (Soncino translation.)
- 6 It may be noted that R. Yohanan, who lived in the third century, is cited in this passage, as an authority in the past.
- 7 The order of the books attributed to Hezekiah (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs) is not the same as in the authorship section (Proverbs, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes). This may support the suspicion voiced above that the two sections were originally distinct.
- 8 The title given to Lamentations here is *qinoth*, (i.e. laments) and not that which has become traditional in the Hebrew Bible, *ekah*, (lit. "how", the first word of the text).
- 9 The early authorities named in 15b are: R. Eliezer (1st - 2nd century), who said "the time of the Judges"; R. Joshua b. Korhah (2nd century), "Ahasuerus"; R. Nathan (2nd century), "Sheba"; the Sages, "Chaldaeans".
- 10 Num 22 - 24. The title of the *parashah*, in Hebrew Bibles is "Balak".

Frederick E. Greenspahn

Hapax Legomena in Biblical Hebrew. A study of the phenomenon and its treatment since antiquity with special reference to verbal forms.

SBL Dissertation Series 74.
Scholars Press, Chico,
California, 1984.

pp. XIV, 260 Hardback \$16.50,
paperback \$10.95.

This monograph - originally a doctoral thesis - is a highly technical study of a linguistic phenomenon, namely the fact that a great many Hebrew words in the Old Testament occur once and once only. Such words have long since been referred to as "hapax legomena", a term borrowed from ancient Greek grammarians. The term is both convenient and universal in biblical scholarship; it can be casually used in the classroom, for example, as a sort of consolation to the students that such-and-such a word is of course new and unknown to them for the simple reason that it occurs nowhere else (or at least nowhere else within the covers of the Hebrew Bible). It is probable, however, that many Old Testament scholars use the term without much general appreciation either of the nature and extent of the phenomenon, or of the problems surrounding it. This monograph offers a useful introduction to the topic, lists the data, discusses the major problems, and gives a history of the treatment of the hapax legomena, with interesting comparisons between medieval rabbinic techniques and modern academic ones.

Beyond all this helpful information, Greenspahn renders a real service to Old Testament scholarship by refuting two general impressions. The first is that there is an inordinately large number of hapax legomena

in the Old Testament; the second is that they constitute a major problem for exegesis and translation. Two things must be said about their frequency. Firstly, if properly defined, the number of hapax legomena is not large. Greenspahn finds only two hundred and eighty-nine "absolute" hapax legomena; even the fullest possible list which he would admit numbers one thousand five hundred and one, or less than one third of the total Old Testament vocabulary. Secondly, by comparison with samples from a considerable variety of literatures (tabulated on page 34), in a variety of languages, the percentage of hapax legomena in the Old Testament is surprisingly low; the norm seems to lie somewhere between one third and two thirds of total vocabulary.

The fewer the hapax legomena, obviously, the smaller the problem for exegesis and translation. Greenspahn shrewdly observes, moreover, that many of the recent disputes over the meaning of individual Hebrew words do not relate to hapax legomena at all, but to vocabulary previously thought to be well-established. In Greenspahn's opinion, only twenty seven hapax legomena in the whole Old Testament remain puzzling.

Greenspahn in his doctoral research set out to explore a well-known but insufficiently analysed phenomenon; and his findings are worth having. To the reviewer's mind, however, there are two dangers arising from a study of this sort. Firstly, it is easy to forget that hapax legomena (however they may be identified and defined) constitute an extremely arbitrary and artificial category; the general problem for exegesis is rather that of rare vocabulary. A word might occur a dozen times in the Old Testament, but if the contexts were insufficiently varied, it might be quite difficult to pin down its meaning with precision. On the other hand, there are many hapax legomena which present no difficulties whatever. Secondly, it is easy to forget that each hapax legomenon (or item of rare vocabulary, for that matter) presents a separate problem; collating them does nothing to explain them.

Greenspahn does acknowledge the first point, but does not perhaps emphasize it sufficiently. He tends not to recognize the second danger. He argues, for instance, that since (as he has demonstrated) hapax legomena in the Old Testament are relatively rare, they should never surprise us when we meet them; therefore we ought rather to expect them, and hence the exegete must not resort to textual emendation in order to produce a more familiar word or form.

This argument may be true statistically; but it is a non-sequitur when dealing with any individual item of vocabulary, which may be the exception to prove the rule. Agreed, many biblical scholars have been all too prone to resort to textual emendation; but it must always remain one possible technique. The technique is particularly attractive when the root consonants of a hapax legomenon constitute an improbable phonemic cluster. An instance is the sequence ayin-ayin-resh in the word y^{ec-c-}o erū in Isaiah 15:5. Greenspahn himself labels this word as "corrupt" in his index, though his brief discussion on page 147 reaches no conclusions. If in the odd instance, then, textual emendation is at least tolerable if not strongly indicated, then we can never rule it out ab initio in the consideration of any hapax legomenon. Since by definition a hapax legomenon is unique, the chances (even if they cannot be computed statistically) of one consonant (or more) being incorrect are relatively high, as compared with words occurring twice or more.

The point may be illustrated by a proper name, a class of words which Greenspahn understandably excludes from consideration. The name "Dodanim" is a hapax legomenon in Genesis 10:4; but it is widely agreed that the name should be "Rodanim", as in 1 Chronicles 1:7. In this case the arguments for a textual error are overwhelming; nobody would argue that because the word is a hapax legomenon, its consonants are sacrosanct. But if it had happened that the parallel list of names in 1 Chronicles 1:7 had shared the form "Dodanim" with Genesis, we may be sure that commentators would have been much more tentative about emendation. The moral is clear:

a dislegomenon is immeasurably more strongly based than a hapax.

The book is well produced, and misprints few. On page 196 "Jonah 9:4" should be "Joshua 9:4"; and on page 198 the Hebrew word against Psalms 132:4 should be snt. The most puzzling misprint of all is "Ezra 47:17 tqwph" on page 198, which defeats the reviewer's powers of emendation! The indexes are useful; but it is a pity that no biblical index is included.

The Queen's University of Belfast.

D. F. Payne.

E. Best, The Gospel as Story (Studies of the NT and its World, ed. J. Riches: T & T Clark, 1983)
pp155, £8.95: ISBN 0 567 09342 5.

In this small book of twenty-two chapters, Ernest Best offers us a thoroughly valuable introduction to the study of Mark's gospel which is constantly, but unobtrusively, in dialogue with recent continental and English-speaking scholarship. But it is not a review of the work of others on Mark; it is a personal reaction to the problem raised by the gospel, and, with more than thirty years of dedication to the study of Mark, Best's voice has a right to be heard. What he says is clear, balanced, and, to a very large extent, convincing because he is extremely sensitive to the material he is working on and utterly sensible about it. This is a tribute in days when fashion or eccentricity seems to be highly valued.

The kind of basic problem which Best seeks to identify and, if possible, solve includes: the nature of Mark's gospel, the occasion of its composition, Mark's purpose in writing it, the contribution the evangelist made to the existing traditions concerning Jesus, and, above all, what it is that holds the book together so that it is clearly recognisable as a unity and not just a collection of anecdotes. Since a review cannot do justice to everything in the book, I shall select what interested me most.

Emphasis is laid on the gospel's having to be written to

be heard or listened to, and so it would have engaged its audience more directly with its dramatic intensity. In this connection an important point is made:

The Gospel was written for believers who knew the stories it contained as individual stories before they heard the whole. They came to the whole with that knowledge. The way we understand any book will depend a great deal on whether we already know its content and the conclusion to which it is moving. (pp19.20)

Best accepts some connection of Peter with the Gospel, possibly as the one from whose teaching and sermons "notes" were taken to supplement the tradition, but he does not accept the "imaginatively attractive" theory that Mark was the John Mark of Acts, the companion of Paul on part of his first missionary journey. As for the occasion of the Gospel's writing, Best considers the views of Mar sen and Brandon, but prefers to think that the cause of writing may have been internal. "Something which was going on while Mark was actually writing: some pastoral need of the community or some threat to its unity, stability or orthodoxy coming from it" (p34) or possibly some other part of the church.

A very interesting chapter considers the meaning of "Gospel" and defines it as "a preaching" related to a situation in which Jesus speaks and acts again. Mark is not an apocalyptic writing having its sitz im leben in an apocalyptic community (H.C. Kee). "It is a sermon in the sense of 'a proclamation of the word'. Mark gives God's word to his people. A sermon is the directing of God's word to a particular people in a particular situation. This is what Mark is doing. What holds it together is not a logical exposition of a theme or text but the events in the life of a person, even if the events are not necessarily set out in chronological order, for it is their significance for the needs of his community which is important for Mark" (p41). On the role of the disciples in Mark Best admits that they appear in a bad light, but that does not imply that they represent heretics in the community (expressing a theios anēr christology):

If Mark wants his community to realise that they can be strengthened by God in time of difficulty and forgiven when they fail then he must show the disciples as those who are weak but are at the same time made strong, as those who fail but are forgiven. This is in fact what he has done. (p47)

It is not therefore surprising that Mark's purpose, according to Best, was pastoral, to build up his readers in faith but that does not exclude the view that the evangelist provided information about Jesus and his disciples and attacked false ideas, only that the latter did not belong to his main purpose.

If he supplied information then we shall assume that he believed that what he wrote was true. He may not always have had as much information available as he would have wished, but what he did use he accepted from the tradition as reliable. This is a normal assumption to make of authors who do not declare themselves to be writing pure fiction. It is incumbent on those who believe otherwise to prove their point of view. (p52)

What a straightforward and wise observation! A fine chapter discusses the ministry of Jesus as "the one who cares" by conquering the demonic, healing illness, saving and teaching but also exercising authority. "We are accustomed to read this (the feeding of the five thousand) as a symbol of the eucharist, but Mark's introduction indicates that he intends us to see the miracle as Jesus' feeding the church with his words" (p63). Best defends the ending of the gospel at 16.8 and explains the meaning of the resurrection in Mark (pace Perrin and others) as the affirmation of the living presence of Jesus at the head of the community of believers as leader, cf 14.28;16.7. "The disciples are now bidden to continue their pilgrimage with Jesus into a new situation, that of preaching the gospel. When they go forth on the mission of the gospel he is at their head." (p74)

It will not be surprising to anyone who has read Following Jesus (1981) that one of the best chapters in this book is the theme of discipleship. Two very brief quotations will show how contemporary Best's treatment of this theme is.

True greatness consists in receiving the unimportant such as the child in antiquity. Greatness is not realised in the accomplishment of mighty or inspiring tasks and duties, but in reception of and care for the under-privileged of society (p88)

The journey on which the disciples go is open-ended, a journey in mission towards the world. It is a journey outwards and beyond, determined in its nature by the cross and resurrection, but never a limited journey. (p92)

Between that and the end of the book we are given very precise criticisms of Standaeart's and R.P. Martin's views of Mark's pastoral purpose; a discerning discussion of the nature of Mark's authorship (like the composer bringing together folk-songs and sea-shanties to make a new unity, pp121-22); incisive criticisms of recent attempts to see Mark's composition as governed by rhetorical conventions of discourse, debate and drama (the plot of the story, according to Best, holds together and unifies the Gospel); and the assessment of the "biographical" categorisation of the Gospel (Stanton and Talbert): the Gospels stand in the tradition of biblical (ie OT and Jewish) books, telling about what God has done, rather than in the tradition of ancient biographical works, though that does not imply that they are unconcerned with the historical. The final chapter focusses on the continuing significance of Mark's Gospel. This, it is claimed, lies in discipleship, but "it is from Jesus that discipleship begins; it is because of Jesus and what he has done that discipleship is possible. So Mark in his central drive can still mediate to us an understanding of Christian faith" (p147).

As I said, this is a small book but it is, in my view, a very important one. It will become a handbook for students taking college and University courses on Mark, but true pastor that he is (and therefore so greatly in sympathy with Mark) Best writes with lucidity that will inform every working minister. The quotations I have included in this review will show that the academic study of Mark - and the quality here is very high - is not impenetrable or dull. In Best's hands it is illuminating,

interesting, and provides good food for preaching. This is a book greatly to be welcomed and widely read.

University of Sheffield.

David Hill

Raymond L. Brown, The Critical Meaning of the Bible

Geoffrey Chapman 1982 £4.95 pp.x,150

Raymond Brown, distinguished American Roman Catholic scholar and Professor of Biblical studies at Union Theological Seminary, New York, has written a short and provocative book on the Bible and how the churches ought to make proper use of modern biblical criticism.

In the introduction he states his belief that the ordinary church member tends to be a fundamentalist in the sense that he or she takes any verse in scripture by itself as authoritative, not realising the very varied cultural backgrounds from which the writers spoke, though quite rightly believing that God does speak to us uniquely through the scripture.

This realisation in Brown's view has for the first time been faced by the Roman Catholic Church in the documents of the Second Vatican Council, but has been faced in a very cautious and tentative way.

The Bible is "the human word of the Almighty God". In everyone speaks within his own culture and within the limitations of the knowledge of the time. In the OT many Israelites believed that there was no knowledge of God in Sheol. Throughout the Bible slavery was generally accepted as a normal part of the economic system. Such views, however, cannot properly be taken by themselves. Very often within the Canon, one part modifies and illumines another. NT confidence in life, real life beyond death transforms previous belief. In the early church Jesus' teaching and example led to the abolition of slavery. Even within a biblical book we see a fuller statement of the truth. A tremendous denunciation of the injustices within Israel, inflicted by the rich on the poor, and the doom that this must involve for the whole nation, is followed at the end of the book with a declaration of the hope that comes from the

divine mercy, added, may well be by a disciple within the prophetic circle. A Micah sees a day to come when through God's providence men will beat their swords into ploughshares (Micah 4.3) and a later prophet can set over against this a day more dread and drear, when in a time of God's judgment men will be called to turn their ploughshares into swords (Joel 3.10)

Brown, then, seeks to show the present application of scripture to new circumstances under the chapter headed "What the Bible meant and what it means". We can see this beginning already within the NT. Take a saying of Jesus in a specific situation. Note how this was then applied by the earliest witnesses to a new situation; add the use Mark makes of it and finally how Matthew and Luke adapt Mark's words to new situations. So in our day it is the duty of the scholar to tell us what each biblical writer meant in his situation. It is the duty of the authorities in the church to indicate how it is to be applied in the present. But who is the authority in the church to teach the contemporary application? The Roman Catholic church at the Second Vatican Council had repeated the earlier teaching that this was the right of the magisterium, and then had gone on to say that this teaching office is "not above the Word of God, but serves it, teaching only what has been handed on, listening to it devoutly, explaining it faithfully with the help of the Spirit (Constitution on the Divine Revelation, 10). But who, asks Brown, is the teaching office and is it also the listening office? Not only the bishops but the schoolteachers and parents are the teaching church, and all the bishops and the Pope should be also the listening church, listening to the word of God as it is expounded by someone like Mother Theresa. And here is there really a tension, as has been alleged, between the bishops and the scholars? Is the real tension not, in fact, between the bishops and scholars on the one side and the two extreme groups on the other - the leftwing press and the rightwing ultra-conservatives? Some of the ultra-conservatives in the U.S.A within the Roman church have set up would-be orthodox seminaries and implied that other seminaries were heretical. It is no less a myth in America that there are two solid groups, a solid group of bishops and a counter solid group of scholars in tension

with one another. In fact there is a considerable variety within each group and each group knows its own eccentrics and otherwise lives with its own variety.

Brown next asks: Why does biblical scholarship move the church so slowly? He believes that the bishops at Vatican II were so cautious in using the new biblical insights because they were chiefly conversant only with French biblical scholarship, itself very conservative. Only after the war did the more adequate German scholarship come to be known. In America, for example, there had been no first-class postgraduate schools except the Protestant ones. Again all Roman Catholic teachers of scripture had to have a qualification from one of the institutions at Rome which had remained very traditional. So the Protestant scholars at the Vatican Council, themselves like Oscar Cullmann, by no means radical men, were critical of the use of the Council materials of NT scholarship. But the Council did make a genuine beginning here.

This conservatism is evident also, Brown argues, in regard to the authorship of NT writings. It has tended to assume that the writer of Acts was himself Paul's travelling companion, the doctor Luke, even if there appears to be real differences in the account of events in Acts when compared with Paul's own account, for example, in his letter to the Galatians. Similarly, the Pastoral Epistles have been taken to be directly the words of Paul, in support of a doctrine of apostolic succession.

The reference to the church in Matthew 16 is accepted as a word used by the incarnate Jesus and not as an interpretation - the correct interpretation - after the church came into being. It is not really necessary to find all later developments explicitly stated in the NT. We do not in fact know from it that only males, appointed by the apostles, celebrated the Eucharist.

It is now essential that members of the church in N. America, for example, should properly understand the nature of scripture since a great deal of religious instruction in Catholic schools is no longer given by priests but by laymen and laywomen. They have to face the fact that a great debate goes on between Creationists and Evolutionists when

in fact there should be no real tension here.

The author then further illustrates the need for a proper understanding of scripture by examining the meaning of priesthood. There are three meanings of the word in the bible. There is the unique priesthood of Jesus Christ. There is the priesthood of all the people of God, and on the analogy of the OT priesthood Christians in the postapostolic generation began to speak of the leaders as priests, though the word is not used of them in the NT. He writes that after the priesthood of Christ should come, not the priesthood of the laity, but that of the whole people of God (including the clergy), all offering spiritual sacrifices. Here the greatest example for us all is not a bishop or even a pope but the virgin mother of our Lord. Certainly those who preside at the Eucharist are called to special self-dedication, not however as princes nor as pals but as Christians outstanding in compassionate service. To them due respect should be shown but not blind obedience - absolute obedience can be given only to Christ. If Christians are dissatisfied, they should observe the Matthaean instruction and go to the authorities themselves and not rush at once to the Press or on to Television.

The new understanding of scripture, Brown believes, should lead all the churches towards reform. None of them, he believes, is totally faithful to the scriptures in life, structure and spirit. Already in many American faculties of theology there are teachers from both traditions sharing their common biblical knowledge and all the international biblical and theological societies are attended by representatives of all the main churches. Already the Roman church has introduced much of what the Reformers called for - in the light of scripture - worship in the vernacular, a proper place for preaching, participation of the laity, consultative bodies at all levels. The churches of the Reformation have to be asked if they are faithful to the central witness of the scriptures or unduly taken up with social questions only.

In his final chapter, Brown discusses the structure of the church and its biblical basis. What is clear in the NT is that there is episcopē, oversight, exercised both by an

episcopos and by others. The Twelve, in our Lord's purpose represent the leaders of a renewed Israel, but they play, most of them, a small part in the early church. In the thirties a deliberative assembly, called by the Twelve, decides on policy. They appoint superintendents to care for the needs of the Hellenist group and probably a similar body for the Hebrew community of whom James was the leader. Next we meet Paul exercising apostolic authority in teaching, reproving, exhorting and passing judgement and appointing local leaders but we do not know if they were equal, had titles or held permanent office. At first prophets as well as apostles probably exercised oversight and presided at the Eucharist. Probably different rules were laid down in different environments. There were clearly women deacons (Phoebe, Rom. 16.1) and perhaps women presbyters (like Prisca) who may, however at that time, not have exercised oversight over men. In the Johannine letters authority still seems to belong to the Spirit-led community. Here, as in the expression of the faith, there seems to have been considerable variety.

This all shows how much new thinking is going on in North American Catholicism and as one who himself teaches in a non-Roman Catholic institution, Brown demonstrates the extent of biblical discussion going on between scholars of the various traditions.

Union Theological College
Belfast.

J.L.M. Haire

Karl Rahner, S.J., Theological Investigations, Vols 18, 19

Tr. by E. Quinn, London

Darton, Longman, Todd 1984

Vol 18 pp.vi, 304; Vol 19 pp.vi, 282

Though not the last volumes numerically in the English translations of Karl Rahner's magnum opus, these books are, nonetheless, the last two in the "Theological Investigations" series. They are, appropriately, published on the occasion of the eightieth birthday of this distinguished German Roman Catholic theologian, and deal, respectively, with basic issues in theological content and method (God and Revelation) and with issues in the life of the Church today (Faith and

Ministry.

Rahner's theology has been characterized by the following notable features:

- (a) A concern to give a philosophical basis and framework to dogmatic theology - in his case what has come to be known as "Transcendental Thomism".
- (b) A desire to write theology not in the form of a comprehensive Dogmatics but in a series of articles more suitable, he believes, to make the content of the faith or aspects of it intelligible to modern man.
- (c) While remaining largely within the framework of traditional Roman Catholic dogmatic teaching, giving it a reinterpretation in the light and spirit of Vatican II and even at times moving in a direction which stretches such interpretation to the limits.

A typical example of Rahner's approach is his article on Mary's Virginity (Vol 19.17) Here he seeks to show how an answer can be given to a Roman Catholic theologian who accepts the virgin birth on biblical grounds but denies the perpetual virginity of Mary. For Rahner the doctrine must be reaffirmed but not simply repeated. It has to be related to the basic revelation of God in Christ and Mary's relationship to this. It is neither simply asserted on the authority of past statements nor an experienced data (eg Mary's statements) but on theological grounds. However, since dogma is irrevocable, to deny it as erroneous would be contrary to Roman Catholic teaching.

Again Rahner believes that one cannot simply ask the Magisterium to pronounce on the matter on dogmatic grounds or on biblical grounds; it must be left to the prayerful reflection of the faithful and of theologians both of whom are called to be patient so that eventually, from the present position, a more authoritative answer may come and further light may dawn. This is indeed typical of the way in which Roman Catholic thinking takes place and evolves. On the one hand the faithful believe certain things and these are taken into account; on the other hand theology also reflects on the faith, and, finally, the Magisterium makes a further statement, if necessary, on the matter.

For many this is not an entirely satisfactory state of affairs or answer but nonetheless it is both typical of Rahner himself thinks and how his church acts.

Clearly Rahner is faced with the dilemma that all Roman Catholic theology is up against today, namely, how on the one hand to affirm what has been definitively decided in the past and on the other to be true to the insights of Vatican II, the biblical revelation and current questions and doubts both in the minds of lay and scholarly people alike. Given these various pressures that are on a person like Rahner, an answer of "wait and see" is inevitable. However, the question of mariology is this: can the dogmas about Mary be seen to conform to the basic revelation that Rahner espouses or do they not rather conflict with the biblical evidence which can scarcely be said to support in any clear way, if at all, Mary's perpetual virginity?

Rahner takes up a further theme basic to the Christian tradition, namely, that of the person of Christ and what he believes about him (Vol 18.9). Here one might expect clarity and a definite statement on the basis of the NT and the normative traditions of Nicaea and Chalcedon. Rahner acknowledges the validity of these approaches but deliberately eschews them and opts for what he calls "questing christology". In other words his approach is anthropological in its beginning if not in its goal. Man seeks salvation but cannot find it in himself but in another human - the absolute bringer of salvation. The answer therefore to man's quest is Jesus of Nazareth who is in solidarity with us and with God. Here Rahner seeks to combine a view of man's self-transcendence into the absolute being of God's incomprehensibility with a christology which seeks to do justice to the ancient creeds and does believe that God gives himself to us finally in Jesus Christ. The question mark however which raises is: Is Jesus the answer to our human quest or does he not give himself to man as the ultimate revelation of God? Whether man is seeking him or not and indeed while he is doing exactly the opposite and deliberately disobeying him. Is in fact a philosophical basis and an anthropological framework necessary for a definitive christology?

A further doctrinal area may serve to illustrate the w

in which Rahner approaches doctrine, namely, the relationship between monotheism and the christian view that God is three in one - the doctrine of the Trinity. The question is whether monotheism and the Trinity are consistent or are contraries? His conclusion is that "the doctrine of the Trinity can and must be understood not as a supplement or an alternative of christian monotheism but as its radicalisation". The christian theologian cannot prove the doctrine of the Trinity either to himself or to other monotheistic beliefs like Islam but must simply bear witness to the reality of revelation and salvation, that the one God is manifest in three modes of existence (economically) and that this is how God is in himself. This is the deep truth of all monotheism and every concept which finds this unacceptable has gone but part of the way or even denied it. Rahner offers a statement here more by way of testimony to others than by way of proof which they could accept. He seeks to show what the doctrine definitively states, what are erroneous views about it and what is the problem of all trinitarian language. It is thus seen as a true basis for dialogue with other faiths as well as for a more developed doctrine of the Trinity and is indeed a more acceptable and less philosophical approach than is usual in his writings.

It would, however, be carping to judge Rahner too severely in the light of his philosophical presuppositions, his anthropocentric approach, or his general, though by no means uncritical, acceptance of Roman Catholic dogma. The great variety of subjects covered and the richness of treatment are evidence in these volumes that both in doctrine and practice major concerns emerge which are matters for all the churches and theologians of every persuasion to deal with. As an ecumenist he enters into dialogue with others, accepts their critique and states that "questions are still open which the institutional church regard as definitively answered." His concern with the problems of modern man and his wish to make the faith, as far as possible, comprehensible to him, his views on the work of God outside the church and in other religions in particular indicate something of the breadth of his interests. There is evident too a pastoral concern in taking up issues like parochial pastoral work,

spirituality in the priesthood, consecration in service and christian dying. All of these Rahner handles with sympathy, understanding and depth of spiritual insight.

Thus despite the difficulty of the language and comprehension, the depth and scope of Rahner's "Theological Investigations" together with his profound insights all make him out as one whose writings merit continued study by christian and non-christian alike both as a source of challenge and guide to thought and life.

Union Theological College
Belfast

John Thompson.